DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 351 444 CE 062 067

AUTHOR	Thompson, Rhodda
TITLE	The Railroad Retirement Board: An Agency Promoting Training and Education.
PUB DATE	Jun 92
NOTE	74p.; Master's Thesis, DePaul University.
PUB TYPE	Dissertations/Theses - Masters Theses (042)
EDRS PRICE	MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Adult Education; Adult Literacy; *Basic Skills; Job Performance; *Job Skills; *Job Training; *Labor Force Development; Literacy Education; Literature Reviews; Postsecondary Education; Program Development; *Program Implementation; Public Agencies; Secondary Education; Skill Development; Vocational Education
IDENTIFIERS	*Railroad Retirement Board; *Workplace Literacy

ABSTRACT

A study of the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) showed that the RRB was only a microcosm of the problem of unprepared workers being experienced by employers nationwide. Implementing basic skills programs was found to be crucial because corporations and government agencies, like the RRB, found the labor pool to be poorly educated. Research on development of remedial training programs and approaches being used to train and motivate workers led to these recommendations to the RRB for initiating basic skills programs: needs assessment; development of strategies; review of key features of successful basic skills programs; program design, including clear definition of objectives, organization according to employees' level of knowledge and by job tasks, and program structure that encourages participation; use of managers as trainers; application for federal funding for training; motivation of employees to maintain favorable worker performance; and provision of leadership. The literature showed that business could participate in improving education by specifying relevant skills and that schools and businesses needed to increase communication with each other. In addition, schools needed to devise ways to show students the relationship between literacy and acquisition of good jobs. (Appendixes include 45 footnotes and a 31-item bibliography.) (YLB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED351444

THE RAILROAD RETIREMENT BOARD:
AN AGENCY PROMOTING TRAINING AND EDUCATION

©Rhodda Thompson 1992

Submitted in partial fulfillment of
requirements for the degree of
Master of Science
Management of Public Services

DePaul University
June, 1992

Approved by

Dr. Richard A. Yanikoski
Research Advisor

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN OTHER THAN PAPER COPY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

R Thompson

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

CE 062067

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE

ABSTRACT iii

Chapter One. Introduction

The Railroad Retirement Board 1
The Problem 4

Chapter Two. Strategic Planning and Management Approaches for Remedial Training

Assessment 8
Testing Methodology 8
Program Design and Training 11
Managers As Trainers 23
Government Funding for Training 28
Motivation and Leadership 32

Chapter Three. The Effect of New Work Force Trends

Education and Business 52
Directions for the Future 57

Chapter Four. Conclusion and Recommendations 60

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research project is to examine methods to help the Railroad Retirement Board (the "RRB") establish in-house training programs that will produce competent workers. I met with two officers of the RRB's Human Resources Department to discuss the agency's staffing difficulties. Later I interviewed people involved with training in public and private agencies, and meticulously reviewed and selected publications that centered on training, program development, remedial education in schools and in the work place.

I discovered that the RRB is only a microcosm of the problem now being experienced by employers across the country. Implementing basic skills programs is crucial because schools are producing incompetent graduates, forcing corporations and government agencies like the RRB to hire poorly educated people. I have concluded that without effective counter measures, the RRB will undoubtedly suffer into the next decade(s).

Chapter I. Introduction

RAILROAD RETIREMENT BOARD

The Railroad Retirement Board (the "RRB"), a large bureaucratic, federal agency, is headquartered in Chicago. It has a legislative office in Washington and five regional offices in Atlanta, Hackensack, Cleveland, San Francisco and Kansas City, Missouri. The RRB employees (more than 17,000 agents) process claims and issue benefits for retired railroad workers and their dependents. The RRB is the only federal agency headquartered outside the Washington/Baltimore area.

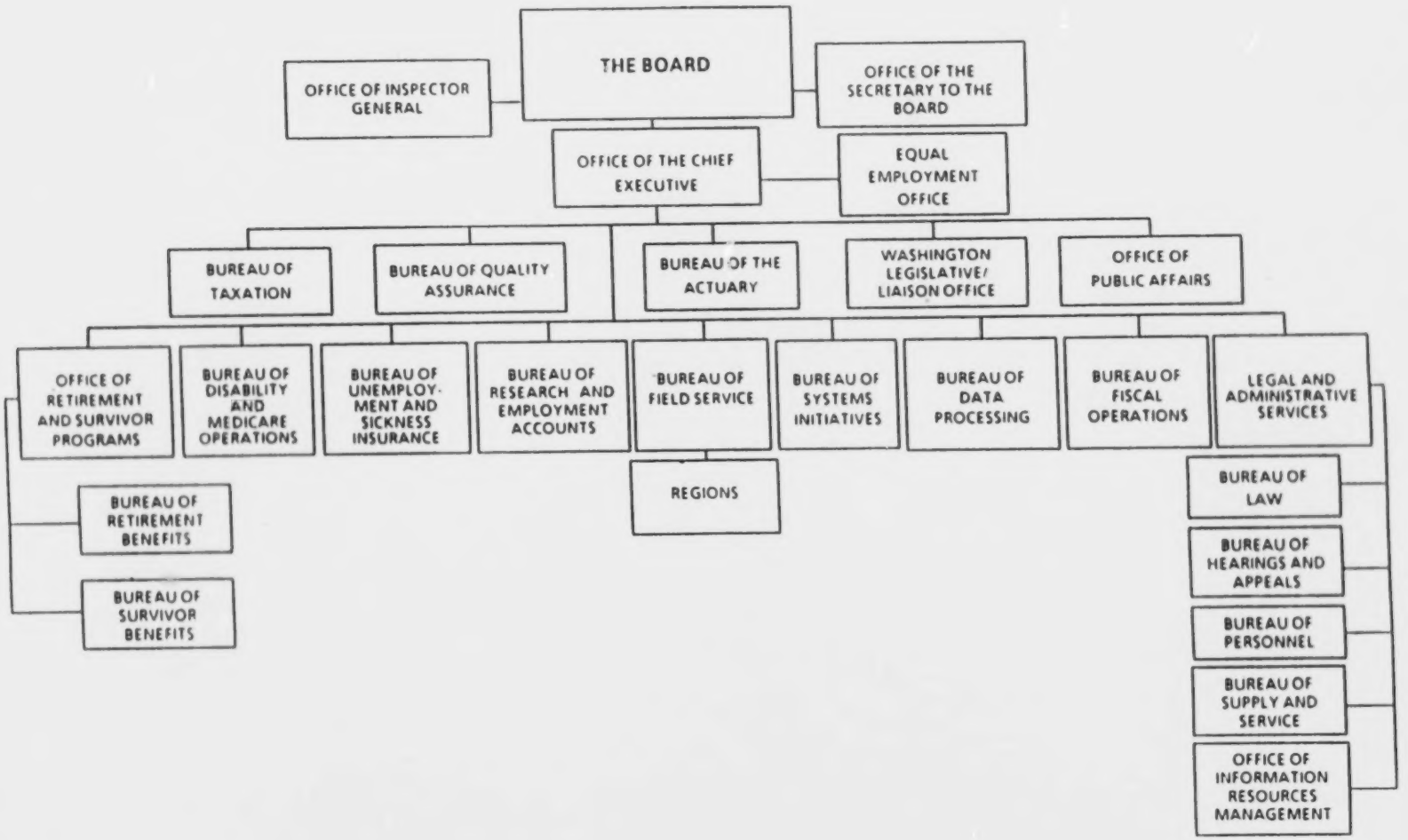
A hierarchical style of management is used by the RRB to control, coordinate and direct staff toward the achievement of its goals. Instructions, rules, orders, etc., are administered by management and then sent down through each rank. This "pyramid" order is based on division of function and authority (see attached Exhibit A). The background and services of the agency are profiled as follows:

Background and Client Services

The Railroad Retirement Board is an independent agency in the executive branch of the Federal Government. The RRB's primary function is to administer comprehensive retirement-survivor and unemployment-sickness benefit programs for the nation's railroad workers and their families, under the Railroad Retirement and Railroad Unemployment Insurance Acts. In connection with the retirement program, the RRB has administrative responsibilities under the Social Security Act for certain benefit payments and railroad workers' Medicare coverage.

EXHIBIT A

Railroad Retirement Board Administrative Organization


THE BOARD
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE
EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OFFICE
BUREAU OF TAXATION
BUREAU OF QUALITY ASSURANCE
BUREAU OF THE ACTUARY
WASHINGTON LEGISLATIVE/ LIAISON OFFICE
OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
OFFICE OF RETIREMENT AND SURVIVOR PROGRAMS
BUREAU OF DISABILITY AND MEDICARE OPERATIONS
BUREAU OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND SICKNESS INSURANCE
BUREAU OF RESEARCH AND EMPLOYMENT ACCOUNTS
BUREAU OF FIELD SERVICE
BUREAU OF SYSTEMS INITIATIVES
BUREAU OF DATA PROCESSING
BUREAU OF FISCAL OPERATIONS
LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES
BUREAU OF RETIREMENT BENEFITS
BUREAU OF SURVIVOR BENEFITS
REGIONS
BUREAU OF LAW
BUREAU OF HEARINGS AND APPEALS
BUREAU OF PERSONNEL
BUREAU OF SUPPLY AND SERVICE
OFFICE OF INFORMATION RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Effective April 23, 1990

As an independent agency in the executive branch of the Federal Government, the RRB reports to the President on its operations and to the Congress. Officials of the RRB frequently testify at congressional hearings about proposed legislation to amend the Railroad Retirement and Railroad Unemployment Insurance Acts.

History

The RRB was created in the 1930's by legislation establishing a retirement benefit program for the nation's railroad workers. Legislation was enacted in 1934, 1935, and 1937 to establish a railroad retirement system separate from the Social Security program legislated in 1935. Sickness benefits were added in 1946.

Legislation enacted in 1974 restructured railroad retirement benefits into two tiers, so as to coordinate them more fully with Social Security benefits. The first tier is based on combined railroad retirement and Social Security credits, using Social Security benefit formulas. The second tier is based on railroad service only and is comparable to the pensions paid over and above Social Security benefits in other heavy industries.

Mission Statement

The primary mission of the Railroad Retirement Board is to administer the Railroad Retirement Act and the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act, and to assist in providing Medicare health insurance, Social Security payments, and income tax information to beneficiaries.[1]

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (the "OPM"), located in Washington, D.C., is the main managerial agency for the five RRB regional offices and area offices in all 50 states. The regional offices divide authority over the area offices.

In 1988, at the request of Congress, the OPM submitted a report, *Civil Service 2000,* prepared by The Hudson Institute, which defined the federal work force's long-term needs. This report has

been issued to federal agencies under the OPM as a guide to help them obtain the knowledge to bring current and future employees up to set standards. Therefore, the RRB, along with all other governmental offices, is presently undergoing a massive internal transformation in an attempt to meet employment demands (cited in the Civil Service report) that will range from the present to well beyond the year 2000.

THE PROBLEM

Acquiring adequate staff for clerical and administrative positions that may or may not require college degrees is a major concern of the RRB. *Civil Service 2000* explains that most employment needs for federal agencies will vary, but there is one primary need that is shared by all--acquiring suitable personnel. The hiring efforts of every agency will center on training two distinct groups, new employees in entry-level positions and experienced professionals. Following are some excerpts from the *Civil Service 2000* report:

> . . . .hiring patterns suggest that Federal training needs will be concentrated in two areas: 1) among new workers in the lowest level jobs, where turnover is high; and 2) among the highest-skilled professionals with transferable skills, alternative job opportunities and rapidly evolving fields. The first category is dominated by clerical workers. In these low-paying positions, maintaining sufficient levels of productivity is likely to require remedial education in some cases, as well as basic skills development.
>
> The second group includes engineers, accountants, program and budget analysts, lawyers, physical scientists, and computer specialists. Since few of these workers will be hired from

> outside the government at much above entry level, it will be necessary for the government to invest heavily in the continuing development of the skills of those whom it retains.[2]

This report is a self-examination and warning to America. Its intention is to focus public awareness on the problems of our work force, particularly in the area of Civil Service. Neglecting weak members will penalize society. We are compelled to pursue excellence in teaching and learning; only thus can stability be restored to the American economy.

For years, the RRB hired high school graduates who sought work upon graduation and who would accept salaries considerably lower than those in private industry. Until the late 1970's, these hirees proved to be adequate in learning and skills. In the last few decades, however, the quality of education has plunged drastically. RRB's personnel department has discovered that a great many job applicants lack basic skills that should have been mastered in grade school.

John Malich, Director of Personnel at the RRB, commented on its difficulties in these terms:

> Part of our hiring problem is the educational system we have here in the city. It is getting very difficult to recruit good people. We go out to some high schools where the "pass rate" is anywhere from 20 to 30 percent as far as passing the basic federal government clerical test. 70 to 80 percent of the people that we test do not pass.
>
> We are in the process of developing a training program so that people we recruit, primarily, from the Chicago school system, will be put through much more intensive training in their first year of employment rather than deal with things like grammar, punctuation, basic math skills, the

ability to proofread and even their typing skills. All these things are not what they use to be.

> We even find this to be the case in many of the parochial high schools, where years ago, everybody passed. Now we have about 50 percent passing, which is really a sad commentary on our Chicago educational system.[3]

Marge Chambers, Chief of Staffing at the RRB, and Walter Shapiro, author, amplified Malich's views when they stated:

> The private schools that we visit are not located in high income neighborhoods. There is really no reason to recruit there because those people are going on to college, trade school or something like that. We have to target our recruitment on people that need full-time jobs after coming out of high school. And, it's the same with the public school system. The schools that we go to are those where we know that people are really looking for full-time jobs.[4]

> Whether it is an inner-city high school with as many security checkpoints as a Third World airport, or a suburban middle school where only *"geeks"* bother to do their homework, the school too often has become a place in which to serve time rather than to learn. The results are grimly apparent: Clerks at fast-food restaurants who need computerized cash registers to show them how to make change; Americans who can drive but cannot read the road signs; a democracy in which an informed voter is a statistical oddity.[5]

Mr. Malich and Ms. Chambers are especially concerned about being able to prepare inner-city hirees for positions because they make up most of RRB's work force. It is imperative that training programs be instituted to enhance the basic skills of this limited group.

The RRB has sought to meet its personal needs through some creative community outreach projects. Malich and Chambers discuss a RRB community project that has achieved success.

> In the typing area, the Railroad Retirement Board has set up a satellite unit in Ford City away from the downtown headquarters, mainly to be able to attract working mothers who want to work on a part-time basis. And, since we set it up, there has been almost no turnover at all. The mothers cooperate among themselves. They have the kinds of jobs where, in some cases, they can walk to work or if they have a child care problem, someone else from that group will either substitute or be able to take care of their children. They are a very self-contained unit.
>
> It's an excellent unit. We now not only have them typing, but we have increased their grades because they have taken on some basic claims level work.[6]
>
> One of the reasons that led us to the Ford City concept was that the people we were getting at our office, weren't very good and the good ones were leaving.
>
> The bad ones didn't have basic skills. Those that were qualified for the salary we were offering concluded that it costs too much to travel from their homes to this office. The RRB thought that if it opened a unit close to an area where there were working mothers who had previous secretarial and typing experience before starting families, the unit would more than likely meet with success and it has.[7]

The agency is faced with a great challenge--adapting to a changing, ill-equipped work force that needs to develop efficient skills for handling simple tasks. Placing new recruits in a few programs has brought some success to the agency, but additional programs are necessary to raise employee-competence levels. Capable workers would strengthen the RRB, increase organizational longevity, and help stabilize our troubled economy.

Chapter II. Strategic Planning and Management Approaches for Remedial Training

ASSESSMENT

The RRB has evaluated its situation and determined that establishing a flexible remedial training program must be its top priority. It wants to secure its survival by preparing adept employees to execute internal operations. Manpower of this type could elevate the efficiency of the RRB; i.e., expenses can be better controlled, work can flow more smoothly. However, the agency needs guidance from experienced people to properly address the issue.

To assist the RRB's efforts to upgrade employees' skills, I conducted research on starting remedial training programs; arranged to interview people involved in training at several large employers in the Chicago area, to identify what approaches are being used to train and motivate workers; gathered library materials that discuss labor force training, corporate education, and information from agencies concerned with establishing new training programs.

TESTING METHODOLOGY

The examinations presently used by the RRB to reveal weaknesses and/or strengths of new employees provide adequate results. Nevertheless, the agency could achieve greater leverage toward employee-development if it had a more "specialized" way of testing. By "specialized," I mean applying tests that showcase all possible features of a person's abilities and limitations.

In June 1990, the Educational Testing Service ("E.T.S.") of Princeton, New Jersey, proposed a plan to create special testing tools that would provide employers with methods for locating various deficiencies among staff. If successful, employers will be more fully prepared to manage "problem workers" because wide-scale information will be available.

> Educational Testing Service, publisher of the Scholastic Aptitude Test and other educational and professional exams, is developing a series of products that would assess basic workplace skills, from computer know-how to secretarial savvy to memo-writing ability.
>
> Companies now can sort among thousands of testing products and techniques, from written personality and integrity tests to computer-based simulations of corporate dilemmas.
>
> Overall demand for employee evaluation is huge. About half of all companies conduct some form of competency testing, mostly among job applicants, according to a recent American Management Association survey. And the number is expected to grow, as companies step up their efforts to find the best workers they can in a shrinking pool of young people.
>
> E.T.S. contends its new products will differ from many current personnel tests because they will be computer-based, and will generate diagnoses for further training as well as assessments.

The new support software is being sold, annually, through subscriptions at $795.00 with extra charges for each product. The demands for the software have become so astronomical, that E.T.S. is now generating certification and licensing tests for dozens of industries that want to evaluate their training and testing programs.

On February 27, 1992, I briefly interviewed Ms. Susan Olenick, Program Director for the new program at E.T.S., by telephone to discover its present status. She said, "The name of the program is AEQUITAS, which is Latin for 'justice' and 'fairness'. It is a full blown program now and we've been out on the market for six months."[9] At this point, Ms. Olenick graciously offered to telecopy a one page descriptive report about the program to me. Following is material from that sheet.

The AEQUITAS Program

AEQUITAS is the only PC-based assessment system for evaluating and improving proficiency in office skills that has been validated by Educational Testing Service, the world's largest and most respected testing and measurement company. Test-takers quickly perform work-related tasks while AEQUITAS measures the proficiency of each task and provides prescriptions that immediately help increase the test-takers' skills.

For businesses, AEQUITAS is the validated assessment tool needed to aid the hiring process, to maximize employee training dollars, and to increase the skills and productivity of current employees.

For educators, AEQUITAS enhances the business course curriculum while providing students with a valuable credential that is meaningful in the workplace.

The AEQUITAS Administration System - manages the delivery of tests and the immediate scoring and reporting of test results. Other administrative options allow the user to: (1) manage and query the test-score data base; (2) match tailored job profiles to individual test takers; and (3) customize tests and test results.

The AEQUITAS Series of Assessments

General Clerical Assessments - These fully validated tests of typing and data entry are based on work relevant documents gathered from ETS's

> National Research Study in Secretarial Skills. Typing - Straight Copy, Business Letter and Statistical. Data Entry - Alpha Numeric. Additional tests available in nonvalidated form include: Dos Basics, Filing/Proofreading/Editing.
>
> Basic Skill Assessments for Reading Comprehension, Secretarial Vocabulary and Basic Office Math - Research is being conducted so that results from these tests can not only be interpreted for the clerical/secretarial groups but will also be appropriate for use with other occupational groups such as accounting clerks, receptionists, machine operators, assembly line workers, shippers, packers and more![10]

I perceive that adopting these new methods would greatly benefit the RRB. In comparison to the testing procedures it now uses, the ones being marketed by E.T.S. are superior. In addition, the agency could educate other companies and schools which share a mutual interest in producing experienced workers by circulating information about the AEQUITAS program.

PROGRAM DESIGN AND TRAINING

Upon completion of testing, the RRB can proceed with program design. The next few pages describe approaches to program development and related sources of assistance.

The Center on Education and Training for Employment, (ERIC), located at Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio is a resource facility that nationally collects, stores and disperses voluminous publications on adult, career and vocational education. Requests for monthly abstract journals, newspaper articles, microfiche and computer searches are filled at a nominal fee and digests are sent at no cost. Examples of articles from ERIC include: "Job-Related Basic Skills," "Adult Literacy Issues--An Update," "Workplace

Literacy Programs," "Older Workers," "The New Work Force," and "Improving Basic Skills of Vocational Education Students." ERIC has an enormous assortment to choose from which covers, if not all, nearly every topic involved with improving adult workers. Such material is essential for constructing comprehensive programs that will guide people through the transitional advancement stages of jobs. Eric may be contacted at:

Center on Education and Training for Employment
The Ohio State University
Publications Office, Box P
1900 Kenny Road
Columbus, Ohio 43210-1090
1-800-848-4815

The ERIC digests introduce services which alleviate negative elements that thwart education. For example, one digest describes aids which help youths adjust to work settings after graduation, another examines the National Career Development Guidelines as they apply to different school levels. The guidelines target the issues of educational and occupational awareness, self-concept, interaction skills and career planning.

Other digests assess adult literacy. Teachers frequently use these to plan curriculums, measure goal progress, and evaluate the impact of instructions. The versatile nature of ERIC's resources affords a great advantage to corporations, institutions and individuals who seek to polish remedial skills.

"Proper Skill Training Earns Dividends in Productivity" is an article which outlines the steps for instituting a rewarding training program. It explains why some training programs fail and cites, as examples, some works from two leaders in the training

field--Riordan & Associates and Francis Tuttle Vocational Technical Center.

Basically, the author, Patricia M. Fernberg, concluded that people responsible for initiating "skills" programs must define company requirements for training and the goals training is to achieve. Companies can accomplish this through examinations, interviews and questionnaires concerning self-improvement and goal expectations for employees or they may hire consultants to oversee the research for these data. After the needs have been ascertained, companies must specify their purposes for training programs.

Furthermore, the article stressed that a good training program should influence perpetual learning. Many people leave jobs which they feel are stultifying. Perpetual learning inspires challenge and productivity. People who are truly interested in being competent workers, will appreciate having assignments that require analytical thinking, time and effort. They tend to lose enthusiasm and become lackadaisical toward jobs that become "too familiar" or mundane.

Patricia Fernberg highlights these reasons for program failure: (1) managers lack training expertise and therefore do not understand training concepts; (2) there is no standard of measurement or evaluation to determine whether training is effective; and (3) misplaced manpower.[11] For example, although team grouping can promote productivity and develop character, a team's success rests largely upon how well its members function as a team.

Some people may be intelligent, skilful and show a willingness to work, but they may be more productive working independently.

Patricia Dunn-Rankin and Drake Beil submitted a report, "Primer for Workplace Literacy Programs" to the Program for Occupational Skills training in Honolulu, Hawaii. This report confirms Patricia Fernberg's advice with respect to starting feasible training programs:

> Before developing and implementing a program, course designers must undertake some form of needs assessment. That can range from an informal "perceived need" by an interested manager or supervisor to an expensive "literacy audit" by a source outside the company.
>
> The needs assessment determines several important factors:
>
> - what the goals of the company and the employees are;
> - which training program would best meet those goals;
> - where and how a basic skills improvement program would fit into the company's overall human resources planning and development.
>
> A literacy audit is used to pinpoint workers' basic skill inadequacies. *The Bottom Line, a comprehensive guide for conducting literacy audits,* was published in 1988 and is available from the U.S. departments of labor and education.
>
> Most commercial adult basic education materials use general topics for instruction, rather than materials tailored to the workers' jobs and environments. But to be effective, basic skills instruction must be work-related. Therefore, many companies will have to develop specific workplace instructional materials for their basic skills programs.

> For many workers, initial success in a program provides a sense of control over their lives. That alone serves as an incentive to continue learning.[12]

The Dunn-Rankin and Drake report delineates different methods used by companies to style basic programs, i.e., some are voluntary and open to all employees. This type requires advertisement--flyers posted--to make employees aware of an opportunity to learn. Some programs are only offered to exempt employees; others are mandatory--employees with deficient skills must enroll.

Lastly, the report notes that external incentives, especially promotion and time to attend classes have a direct bearing on the success of in-house training programs. And that workers who frequently attend training become more refined.

Dr. Gad J. Bensinger, chairs the Criminal Justice Department at Loyola University of Chicago. Prior to this, he was the Director of the Criminal Justice Training and Leadership Development Program--a program developed by him to improve the proficiency of criminal justice employees. I asked that he comment on program design; he responded as follows:

> Often training programs are started when an academician sits behind his desk and says that this course should be offered to that group of people. But our first step was to really reach out into various departments and agencies involved in the justice system and find out what the employees thought they needed most.
>
> My staff and I designed a program for adult probation officers. We implemented needs assessment tools to measure where the employees abilities were, i.e., whether it was in reading or writing or math. We interviewed and surveyed probation officers to find out what they thought areas of training, for them, should be. Once we learned where the needs were we decided on what

strategies to use to design a program to meet those needs.

> Before deciding on strategies, however, we prioritized them according to type of resources at our disposal. Strategy selection depends on available resources. Do you have a budget to bring in skilled trainers? If you don't, maybe you will want to go to a school to see if it would be willing to train your people as a public service. You may have money to hire experts or you may want to contact other probation departments to see if they have such experts for training that they can loan to you free of charge. These are some strategies to consider before you begin program design.
>
> Finally, you may be able to write a grant to a foundation to see if you can get money. You have to be creative and use some imagination to make strategies.
>
> After program implementation, you need to evaluate it to find out to what extent your people are learning. Based on your evaluation you can decided on whether or not to re-design the program or to maintain it as is. This is a continuous process because needs may change as well as circumstances.[13]

The needs assessments also showed that the program's employees lacked interpersonal skills. Consequently, Dr. Bensinger and his staff setup workshops to address this concern. Private consultants, specialists in human relations, served as guest lecturers, the employees were taught self-awareness, human relations and communication skills.

Role playing was used as well, to teach employees how to properly handle problematic situations. Scenarios were created, employees were assigned roles to act out each situation. Afterward, the players critiqued events that had occurred during role playing and discussed ways to improve their performance. The

program ran smoothly under Bensinger's leadership. In 1977, he accepted a position as Assistant Professor at Loyola University of Chicago.

Allstate Insurance Companies was established in 1931. It has 54,000 employees, is a subsidiary of Sears, and handles property, casualty and auto insurance. In addition, Allstate has a life insurance company and a business insurance division which offers multi-line insurance services. Located in 48 states, Allstate charges its employees with the mission to provide satisfactory service to customers, ensure that customers are heard and cared for. Jay Morris, Consultant with Allstate's home office in Northbrook, Illinois provided me with the following interview regarding training on January 20, 1992.

> Allstate has offered many types of training programs over the last twenty-five years. We have offered training for non management employees, managers, directors and officers. For example, we had a workshop 20 years ago for Front Line Supervisors who were new to the company. This workshop offered training in compensation, benefits, company guidelines, and inner-personal skills. Today, this workshop has been revised and is offered in two stages to all Front Line managers who are responsible for managing people.
>
> We also offered a workshop called Management in Action that enabled managers to assess their own personal effectiveness. Self-assessment instruments were completed by managers, peers and subordinates. Feedback was provided and given based on noted differences and perspectives. The managers were then given opportunities to work in areas that they felt needed improvement. Today, this workshop experience has been revised to deal with issues such as managing change and leadership.
>
> We currently offer courses in team building, quality and cultural diversity. Our environment is constantly changing and training has been

> repositioned to enable our company to be more competitive and deal with the issue of an ever-changing environment. We are recognized as a leader in the insurance industry.
>
> The company offers training in many other areas such as technical training for claims, underwriting, sales, and operations. We also provide training in beginning, intermediate and advance levels for personal computers. We also offer training in basic and advance presentation skills.
>
> Tuition reimbursement is offered to employees at all levels for anyone who desires to return to school. But, the courses must be applicable to the job. Allstate is constantly looking for ways to enhance the skills of its employees.[14]

Business Writing Skills Update and Business Writing Grammar for Speakers of English as a Second Language ("ESL Grammar"), are the basic presentation skills workshops referred to by Mr. Morris. Both workshops are held at the home office.

Business Writing Skills trains employees to produce quality writing styles. The workshop runs three to four days each month and features two major topics--Steps for Effective Writing and Grammar Review. Each topic covers four points. The points which relate to the first topic are: (1) Writing with a Purpose; (2) Knowing Your Audience; (3) Choosing an Effective Style, Tone and Format; and (4) Effective Language.

The second topic, Grammar Review, discusses: (1) Correct Word Usage; (2) Punctuation for Meaning and Tone; (3) Writing Sensible Sentences; and (4) paragraphing for Organization. 12 students are required per class; if enrollment falls below 12, the workshop will be rescheduled.

ESL Grammar helps students practice noun and pronoun agreement, verbs and tense, preposition usage, articles and so forth. This workshop concentrates on those areas of the English language which are particularly confusing. It runs for four consecutive days during the months of November, December, February and May. The classes require a minimum of eight employees to proceed. Allstate employees greatly benefit from these workshops.

American National is the leading commercial banking organization serving small and mid-sized companies in the greater Chicago area. The main bank is augmented by a number of affiliated banks, branches and facilities in the area, extending coverage into southeastern Wisconsin and northwestern Indiana.

> The general banking needs of the middle market are met by its commercial banking divisions; more specialized segments are served by its real estate, asset-based lending, cash management, corporate finance correspondent and personal banking divisions. It also provides an array of personal and corporate trust services to meet the safekeeping and asset management needs of individuals, companies and governmental agencies.[15]

David W. Bender, Vice President of Human Resources, American National, and former teacher, spoke with me on January 29, 1992, regarding training of new employees who lack fundamental skills.

> American National Bank has no in-house basic skills classes but will pay for people to take remedial courses at Roosevelt, DePaul or Loyola. In terms of just clerical skills, Robert Morris College does a lot of that. In addition, our sister bank, First Chicago, offers a basic skills training program. Any employee needing improvement in basic english and math skills will be required to enroll.
>
> We usually have two groups with insufficient language skills that are placed in customer contact

manager positions, among whom some lack language skills. They are primarily blacks who tend to use more slang and southwest siders that use the old Mayor Daley's, "youse-guys," "dese," "dem," and "dose." You find a lot of them from the far southwest side that say "da Mayor," "da Bulls" talk like that. We have had a number of employees here using this language which aggravates a certain class of people who consider such language beneath them. And because the majority of these people were managers responsible for calling on many of our senior banking clients, a change was needed.

Dr. Bernadette Anderson, a private instructor, conducts a linguistic class for black and other professionals who need to improve their language skills and she also accepts the southwest siders into her class.

The most important thing regarding training new hirees with poor skills, is to hire the right ones--people interested in improving. This will make any trainer's job easier. After selection, pretest each new group to find weaknesses. Get them involved in a self-assessment, problem solving,. . . .more strategic things if you can.

If a company intends this to be a separate training program, have lunches, have dinners with speakers--it just tells trainees they're important.

You have to set up a program that has high expectations, offers a lot of support and challenges individuals. And the first rule is, if they don't have the skills to do this, that's okay, skills can be learned. But, it helps to have the right managers or somebody mentoring them who will encourage trainees to say, 'this is what I'm not good at and I am still working at it'. . . .'these are my plans to get better.' What has worked well for us is to have some kind of a 'big brother' or 'big sister' work closely with them, set very high expectations and put a lot of pressure on them. And frankly what you want is the bottom 20 percentile to say, 'this is too much work,' or 'I have a lot of work,' so you can weed out those who will from those who won't. It's somewhat like the marines, 'We're looking for a few good men'. We want people who can make a commitment and can take 100 percent responsibility. They should have courage and determination. If not, they aren't the right employees for American National Bank.

When I taught public school we had a whole list of words that were not allowed in the classroom and it works with students. ....No disabling words, 'I can't', 'I'm not', 'I'm too stupid.' I would tell them, you can not say that in this room. We had a fine to enforce this rule where you would have to give a nickel or a dime if you were caught using any disabling word. Then, of course, the students loved, especially, to catch you saying something like that. It reinforced, even though it cost me some money, it reinforced in their minds that these were disabling words and they began to react negatively to them. And, I really think that that's part of just simply motivating people and getting them to believe that they can learn. If they believe, it's more than likely they will achieve a lot. You'll get results.

If you get people in training groups who feel that they can not learn, they won't. If you allow these people to hang on, you'll bring down the entire group. Therefore, you're really looking to segregate those people who are afraid to take the risk of being wrong.

Also, make the work environment special by feeding employees positive verbal incentives. For example, you could tell each group, 'I'm not sure how they set up this class, but you people are my strongest trainees yet.' 'You've shown more insight and interest,' or 'This is the most creative group I've ever had' that type of thing. You want to set up a situation where they will compete.

Trainers should adopt some outside programs for in-house training. There are a couple of outside programs that are just excellent and worth doing. For example, there is one by Blessing White called "Managing Personal Growth", I use this one a lot. It's an enforced way of getting feedback from your manager. And, you had better get feedback from your manager. If you think that you're doing great, but he or she thinks you're doing awful, you had better know about the problem. Basically, what it is, is about 72 listed skills and I rate 1-5 two things: how important this is on the job and how well I'm doing it. It forces you to prioritize the job elements and what you're good at. Your manager will do the exact same thing. The two of you will then compare ratings. You get positive feedback--

> what did my manager and I say that I was great at; you get negative feedback--what did my manager and I agree on that I wasn't good at--so it takes a stand. It's not Rhodda saying, 'Dave, you're not very good at this stuff.' My only reaction would be to become defensive and a win-lose personality situation would arise rather than being work centered. This takes it completely into a more statistical type of analysis. The statistics say that you and I agree, already, that I'm good at this, that I'm not good at this. So, there is no defensiveness. All we can do is spend our energy forming an action plan on how to improve on what I'm not good at and do more of what I'm good at.
>
> If you rate yourself as a four on one item, but your manager rates you as a three on the same item, you had better find out why the manager feels this way. On the other hand, if the manager thinks you're handling something well, but you don't then that's great because the manager may know something that you need to know. Whatever you're doing well, keep doing. Managers should use people, in a business sense, for whatever they're good at and not try to change them. Because you will frustrate people trying to change them.
>
> Another outside source I would recommend is community colleges. Many of the community colleges, especially in the suburbs, are really quite good, and reasonable. There are all kinds of training resources out there, offering all kinds of training packages.[16]

Mr. Bender delivered a powerfully, in-depth discussion regarding the design of efficient basic skills programs. He emphasized that managers must stress to trainees the importance of making attempts to handle unfamiliar tasks, even when they doubt their capabilities. Imperfect skills can be honed until they improve. Learning, must be constant until trainees know every routine. If they continue to err after the training session, either retrain them (allow a reasonable time frame), or appoint experienced workers to supervisor their performance. Attaining

knowledge requires making necessary sacrifices and expressing a desire to learn.

Jay Morris and David W. Bender stated that their company training programs have never failed because large sums of money are invested for research to ensure program feasibility before initiating any programs. Therefore, modifying programs to meet changing economic and societal needs as they occur is the key issue facing the companies, not program failure.

MANAGERS AS TRAINERS

Employee training at many organizations is usually handled by trainers; managers are mostly responsible for employee management and rarely train people. Therefore, a manager's organizational value could be enhanced if he or she were also an experienced trainer. For example, more able trainers would strengthen the trainers' reserve. Department managers who are knowledgeable about training and departmental needs could quickly design training methods, thus eliminating the extra time used to call in trainers along with staff travel for outside training.

Furthermore, dividing training could provide room for other assignments because trainers and managers would not have to devote energy toward training exclusively. Working as a team could build camaraderie between trainers and managers. Finally, nurturing staff through training could transform managers into mentors.

Two consultants, experts in marketing resources, discuss the role of managers as mentors:

> Whether formally, informally, or ignored altogether, most successful managers have the opportunity to act as mentors at some point in their careers. Organizations have recognized that some skills can't be taught in the classroom; they must be lived.
>
> The training function can provide a system of benchmarks and performance tracking for mentees, define the role of the mentor, and act as a catalyst for the formation of mentor/mentee relationships. Such efforts can help training be recognized as a force in the shaping of careers.
>
> Managers become more receptive to career development efforts and more cooperative with training as they begin to recognize the broader definition of "human resource development," a definition that goes beyond the classroom and into the career decisions made about people. This is especially true when they benefit by recognition and growth within their own careers as a result.[17]

Managers have a potential impact on employee-performance; whether that impact is positive or negative depends on the level of commitment extended by managers to better educate employees.

Thomas L. Quick is the Executive Director of the Resource Strategies Institute in New York city. In his article, "What About Training Illiteracy," Mr. Quick contends that managers can successfully motivate and train new workers if human resource executives instruct them in the art of effective management. Like Ms. Fernberg, he is disturbed by the knowledge that managers operate in organizations without a good theoretical and conceptual base regarding human behavior.

Quick further explains that properly briefed managers can channel the values and cultures of the work force toward achieving organizational goals. And he cites work of noted behavioral scientists, i.e., Chris Argyris--Immaturity-Maturity theory,

Frederick Herzberg--the 2-Fact Theory, Robert Black and Jane Mouton--the Managerial Grid and Malcolm Knowles, the father of adult learning, and encourages managers to emulate these exceptional role models.

Mr. Quick clearly defines the characteristics of a good manager:

> Managers must understand that so-called principles of managing and of human behavior are universal, but that the practice of the management is one-to-one.
>
> If a manager doesn't understand that, there is absolutely no way in which he or she can hope to be effective with subordinates, especially without understanding individual acculturation and drives.
>
> Another such responsibility is development. It would seem that many management trainers take their titles as trainers literally. They train. They do not develop. That would mean that they are required to work within their clients' operations, where the trainers may believe they have little influence. But if they don't pursue their trainees beyond the classroom walls, they should know that not much actual learning may take place.
>
> It's fine to train people in the understanding of principles. But it's not enough to say, 'All human behavior is goal-directed.' We must help managers to identify their subordinates' goals and drives, such as esteem, achievement, professional growth, satisfaction, status, and group acceptance.
>
> Our clients and trainees depend on us to know the theories and concepts that must underlie the essential work we do in the HRD. That work can help our companies survive and prosper--in a world in which managements in certain other countries have taken American research and thinking more seriously than perhaps we have.[18]

Perceptive managers, experts at reading human behavior, can guide subordinates' actions toward organizational goals. They have the talent to win loyalty and persuade staff to follow their lead.

Such talent, produces rewarding associations between staff and managers.

Kate Ludeman is another advocate for motivating employees through challenge and self-assessment. She indicates that when subordinates' behaviors are assessed, they begin to make positive changes. Being carefully observed and receiving feedback gives subordinates incentive to comply. Moreover, assessing behavior demonstrates whether or not human resources can raise the levels of production and quality within organizations.

Ms. Ludeman reveals that human resource departments play a vital role in educating and motivating workers because companies have removed several managerial tiers, that once performed these duties, and redesigned the tiers that were retained. New tiers' assignments require management to spend less time "coaching" employees and more time on direct reports. Thus, along with regular personnel functions, a growing number of human resource departments are becoming mainly responsible for employee development.

Ms. Ludeman discusses additional advantages of skills assessments:

> Skills assessments offer many other benefits. They accelerate people's learning, job performance, and professional development by offering the reliable feedback necessary for continuous improvement. They also provide useful feedback to self-managed teams and to facilitators of quality programs.
>
> These assessments provide a significant way for HR departments to increase productivity during downturns by showing employees how to work more effectively.

> In addition, assessments provide measurable proof of behavior changes, legitimizing the HR department's role in improving employee productivity by rendering it quantifiable. Especially when the economy is soft, the HR department may need to demonstrate its worth. Skills assessments are one way to improve effectiveness and to measure and demonstrate how the human resource department is doing.[19]

The imminent outlook for our country's workers is that future jobs will demand more than high school diplomas. In the future, employers will seek people who at least possess elementary capacity, are adaptable, logical, independent, alert, and conscientious. Employers intend to hire candidates with educational foundations that can be enriched. They want to be able to forge ahead and not waste time teaching primary skills.

Stephen Cohen discusses specific challenges facing workers in the future:

> First, organizations will have to maximize their employees' potential and effectively utilize their skills. It'll be even more crucial to build on previously learned behavior in order to transfer learning to the performance of new tasks.
>
> Workers will be required to adapt to continuous change and a diverse workplace. They'll have to learn how to remain effective as their workplace environment changes and be versatile enough to get along with all types of people.
>
> Workers will have to be innovative and creative. They'll be held personally responsible for continuing to upgrade their skills. Workers will challenge themselves to think. They'll be expected to learn many different subjects in many different environments. And they'll have to learn quickly and efficiently.
>
> A high premium will be placed on the ability to learn efficiency in the context of continuous change. Success will be more dependent on learn-how than know-how.

> Workers must become empowered to make decisions. Organizations will encourage and facilitate employees in that effort.[20]

The world is constantly changing; those who fail to keep up will be left behind.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING FOR TRAINING

The booklet *Helping Hands Directory: Job Training in Chicago* describes the various types of training offered by city government:

> The Mayor's Office of Employment and Training (MET) funds many different types of training programs using monies provided by the federal Job Training Partnership ACT (JTPA) and Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). All of these programs are free of charge to those individuals who meet the income levels required:

Size of Family	Annual Income
1	$5,770
2	7,730
3	10,610
4	13,100
5	15,460
6	18,080

> (for each additional family member, add $2,620; accurate as of 7/1/88). The MET office makes decisions about which programs to fund in May or June of each year. If re-funded, new cycles of programs start in July.
>
> Some of the programs offered by MET which would aid the RRB include:
>
> **Academic-Classroom Training** (A-CRT) programs are administered primarily through the Alternative Schools Network (phone 726-4030), which consists of 50 schools and agencies that provide remedial education to adults and youth for whom the public school system has failed. Several agencies outside the network offer basic skills training as well.
>
> **On-The-Job Training** (OJT) agencies develop job slots for participants who would otherwise not be hired due to academic skill deficiencies and/or

> lack of work experience. These individuals are given full-time training to perform work while developing job skills. The employer is reimbursed for the training costs up to 50% of wages paid and is expected to retain the worker in unsubsidized employment after the training period.
>
> **Try-Out Employment** (TOE) programs are targeted to economically disadvantaged high school students. Business owners take on subsidized workers for up to 250 part-time hours, and commit to keep them on after the contract is up.[21]

Under the Federal Government Job Training Partnership Act, Cook County is authorized to provide funding for remediation or academic training to organization's under contract to deliver educational services. The providers, as the County refers to them, must submit a proposal to qualify. Samuel Tignatiello, Acting Director for Employee Training with the County, states:

> First, providers must submit a request to be placed on the Inventory of Service Providers list. Upon receipt of that inventory, their abilities that they can deliver are ascertained. Verification takes place by the Contract and Evaluation Division of the President's Office of Employee Training. As soon as the funds are received, and assuming that the applicant is determined suitable to deliver the activities that they have defined, they would receive a request for a proposal with instructions on how to develop the proposal to be sent to us in response to our request. Having done this, they are then evaluated on a basis of their ability and responsiveness of their proposal in comparison to any other bidder proposing to deliver the same services. The evaluation system is determined by the Private Industry Council. It sets the criteria.
>
> 20 percent of the funds are made available to providers to academically train people, under 22 years of age, usually 14-21, who are recognized to need basic training. 5 to 15 percent of the funds goes to adults over 22 who need basic education or training skills. The county does not supply GEDs. Instead, it sends people to a center that grants GEDs upon completion of coursework and passing an examination.

> The type of training the county offers depends on marketing information and provider capability program activities received from the private sector. It tells us what is necessary in terms of vocational skills or tasks achievement for a particular career area.
>
> The first thing to identify is the growth occupation defined in the training and determined by extensive research of the labor market. Whatever is necessary to have an applicant achieve at least entry level skills is the goal for curriculum design, i.e., growth and stable occupation and the training activities that are allowed can be anything from basic and academic training, vocational training in the specific areas in the occupation, then on-the-job training to enhance the vocational skills acquired in the classrooms and then the placement from beyond the on-the-job employers' site. All of this is determined by initial assessment and counseling and the employment development ability plan.
>
> Guidelines for planning set forth all the steps necessary to move the applicant from where they were when they came to us to the time they end employment. We followup with these people one year after to see where they are and if they have any concerns. Specific skills tasks needs are defined by the occupation area that the person is pursuing; they vary from occupation to occupation. Once the area is identified, there is additional testing to see what level the application is and see what areas the applicant needs training in to reach their career goals.[22]

In addition to receiving county and city financial assistance for originating training programs, the RRB may qualify for funding from the state government. Illinois has an industrial training program that covers employee wages during training and fees for depreciation of equipment used during training.

The state operates Prairie State--a small school that funds retraining programs for businesses. The first program, Employer Training Assistance Program (ETAP), assists companies that cannot

withstand the costs of updating workers and equipment by issuing grants, loans and technical aid. The second, Individual Training Assistance Program (ITAP), provides monies to allow workers to update skills to maintain their present position or advance to a higher one.

The application process for receiving state funding varies by state, but may be summarized as follows:

> State-funded labor training programs lend financial assistance to individual firms for worker training or retraining. Assistance is usually in the form of grants, but some states--such as Connecticut, Iowa, and Mississippi--offer tax credits instead. Training must be "firm-specific" or "customized," meaning that skills learned in the program are directly applicable to a worker's job tasks.
>
> The programs are usually administered through flexible state statutes and rules that allow states to fund many different types of training for a variety of firms. State programs offer a wide window of opportunity for firms to receive financial assistance.
>
> **Labor Training Award Process.**
>
> - Initial contact between the firm and the agency that administers the program.
> - Informational meeting: preliminary discussion of whether training would be eligible for funding, discussion of application format, and explanation of requirements.
> - The business completes a draft of the application.
> - The agency reviews the draft application.
> - The agency requests additional information or clarification of current information.

- The business completes the final application.
- Agency representatives review the final application and make recommendations.
- The decision making board reviews the application and the staff recommendation and decides to approve or deny the application.[23]

Companies should investigate their state's application process for funding, before applying, to determine if they meet the criteria. Doing this will save time, energy and increase the chance to obtain state grants.

MOTIVATION AND LEADERSHIP

After a training program is in place and functioning, the RRB will need to motivate employees in order to maintain favorable worker performance. There are several ways in which the agency can motivate: (1) clearly communicate organizational expectations--this will promote good employee-relations and complete understanding of organizational purpose; (2) be attentive; treat staff with respect and dignity at all times--even when reprimanding; (3) be empathetic--undereducated adults are usually embarrassed and frustrated. They may be hostile or display aggressive behavior when first placed in classroom settings. If managers are patient and express genuine feelings of caring, they have a good chance of getting "desired responses"; (4) discover what type of motivation is lacking; some people can be motivated by opportunities for responsibility and recognition; some, by money; others, by

achievement; and (5) be a good listener, value staff opinions, offer praise and assist only when needed.

For example, a manager may make a notation that a task could be done in a more efficient manner, or an employee may require counseling because he/she displays difficultly in handling a task. Material from the commentary *Workplace Solutions* further illustrates this point:

> **Problem**
>
> I am a technician working with six other technicians in a major corporation. We work for a lab supervisor who has absolutely no concept of what it means to supervise effectively. Her primary role is to make sure the work is quality work and is released within reasonable turnaround times. Instead, she spends a great deal of time working alongside us and is constantly getting in our way.
>
> She always takes control over the workload and acts as if we can't function without her. If we are working for a long period of time, out of her sight, she will track us down as fast as a pigheaded bloodhound. She sneaks up on us and asks us what we are working on--as if she doesn't trust us.
>
> She makes all of us nervous, tense and angry, and it is affecting our work performance. At the end of the day, she leaves us in a malicious state of mind.
>
> **Solution**
>
> It's a shame that your company has to put a 'pigheaded bloodhound' in charge of a group of people. Each of you who is unhappy with the situation should make an appointment to see a human relations official. There you can talk one on one about the problems in the department as you see them. No one should be pressured to do this, or it may be perceived as a conspiracy. If several people do voice similar concerns, however, the

> personnel department will likely deal with the problem.[24]

If wisely applied, motivating techniques can establish pride, a sense of worth, and provide assurance to staff members that they are significant persons in the organization. Motivation cannot be cultivated in an environment that is unfair, condescending, or oppressive.

Gale Howden is the Director for Community Relations at the *Palm Beach Post* in Florida. The paper has always provided various training seminars for managers but not for staff. In 1989, that paper initiated a literacy program--it had a group of people (54) who either lacked or had poor basic skills.

The program is arranged in small, four-hour classes; 10-15 employees attend during a regular work week and receive full pay. Classes were purposely kept small to allow employees the chance to work closely with individual tutors and to have computer time. The program rewards students by paying them $100.00 if they progress to higher levels.

In addition to teaching basic courses, the program teaches ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages), Adult Basic Education and preparation for the high school equivalency certificate (GED).

Florida's Adult Education Department for the county school system provides qualified teachers who volunteer their services. The basic skills program is also offered to employees on a voluntary basis. It is set apart from the paper's training

department to allow for discretion and privacy. This way, managers can not check on employees' progress.

Ms. Howden expressed her feelings about the program's results:

> Despite the high qualifications of the program's teachers, Howden says the *Post* has found that learners who begin with very low reading levels need a little extra help. 'They progress the fastest when they have individual tutors for one-on-one help,' she explains.
>
> An unusual feature of the *Palm Beach Post's* basic skills classes is an incentive program that provides cash bonuses to employees as they improve their skills. For example, students receive $100 bonuses when they progress from the ESOL class to the ABE class, or when they raise their skills by four grade levels in the ABE, says Howden.
>
> 'As a newspaper, we are running public service announcements, we're helping fund the county literacy coalition, and we're out promoting literacy as hard as we can to everybody in the community. We would be in a funny situation if we said, 'We're not going to do the same thing for our own employees. We're not going to make the opportunity available to them.' It puts us in a stronger position in promoting literacy.'[25]

The *Palm Beach Post* realizes that company participation is a valuable weapon against illiteracy; its basic skills program is aimed toward raising the literacy level of deficient employees to that of high school.

Ms. Howden supports her company's efforts by speaking at literacy conferences in major cities where she shares information about the *Post's* contributions. Howden has worked closely with the company's human resources department to create the "Newspaper In Education" (NIE) project. NIE is the result of a cooperative effort of some 700 newspapers and school systems throughout the

country. It teaches instructors to use newspapers as learning tools for children and adults. The *Post* later plans to develop other courses that will attract more volunteer tutors to its basic skills program.

As a university department chairman, Dr. Gad J. Bensinger, mentioned earlier, is a "democratic leader" who shares decisions regarding departmental goals. This method allows him to motivate and achieve faculty commitment. Dr. Bensinger has discovered that the institution of clear, understandable goals captures the attention of faculty, satisfies faculty requirement for security within the workplace, creates a believable focus and motivates faculty toward attaining the focus. Here are methods he uses to stimulate faculty:

> I believe in the participatory management style. I attempt, whenever possible, to work toward a consensus when establishing departmental policy, making decisions and maintaining students' standards. Ideas are explained, discussed and efforts are made to reach agreements. Sometimes, as a last resort, ideas are voted on but usually everyone is agreeable.
>
> I prioritize work, set deadlines for assignments and encourage staff to meet them. I list tasks and divide them into short-term or long term projects. I meet with people in an attempt to resolve grievances. First, I listen very carefully so that I may be able to identify the problem and to understand what the person feels is the cause of the problem. Second, after identifying the problem, I must decide whether I have the power to alleviate it. If so, I work, sometimes using research, toward proposing or negotiating a solution.
>
> I also motivate by setting a good example, hard work, proper incentive and rewards, i.e., praise, recommending raises or pay increases.[26]

Participatory management can aid in obtaining employee trust and cooperation. It indicates that managers respect their co-workers and believe them capable of developing to enhance the organization. Also, participatory management relieves managers from the total pressure and responsibility of performing, controlling and initiating ideas. Therefore, participatory management is a proven asset for providing stability within American work places.

However, there is always the likelihood that management will reject some ideas on policy offered by staff. Whenever this occurs, an explanation of reasons for rejection is necessary to direct staff to formulate more acceptable policies.

Dr. Bensinger upholds innovative learning, and therefore has designed an open department where faculty members can share norms and values that contribute to learning. He energizes cooperative behavior by rewarding it because he recognizes how important cooperation is in relation to teamwork.

Maintaining a supportive attitude toward employees may enable managers to avoid conflict. Managers who are good mentors can influence even the lowest skilled employee to perform and produce at his or her best possible level. Achieving quick results is not so important as the method used to gain them.

Blessing White, the firm previously referred to by David Bender of American National Bank during his interview, is an international consulting company that develops human resources for organizations that desire to improve the quality of employee work

performance and strengthen communication between management and staff. Blessing White believes that an organization's success is measured by the level of productivity and effectiveness that stems from the rapport management has with staff. As a result, the firm has designed five development processes (Managing Personal Growth, Helping Others Succeed, Managing Transitions, Peer Coaching and Exceeding Customer Expectations) to enhance factors which are important to people who work, i.e., job satisfaction, self-assessment, personal motivation and management support.

Each process is taught in a workshop setting. The completion time for the workshops varies "Managing Personal Growth", the process discussed, in detail, by David Bender, is held for one to one and one-half days. "Managing Transitions," is a three or six hour workshop. It molds new employees into valuable company assets through orientation. During orientation, new workers and/or transferees learn company policies, objectives and methods of compliance to same.

"Exceeding Customer Expectations," is a process designed for people in such fields as sales and customer service. This workshop runs for one and one-half to two days and focuses on satisfying motivator and performance needs of employees who work toward building and maintaining company clientele.

"Helping Others Succeed" and "Peer Coaching" are processes designed for managers and professionals responsible for raising employee morale, commitment and performance. "Helping Others Succeed" teaches all-level managers to be effective tutors for

large diverse groups. Some of the tools used in this process are reports and participatory discussions.

"Peer Coaching" involves placing staff into teams. By doing so, managers can encourage a bond of trust and support to develop between themselves and their charges. These factors are essential for coping with feedback.

Blessing White builds confidence, pride and self-esteem in poor achievers by using a psychological approach. Its services appear to be excellent and appropriate for creating sound training programs. It is located at 676 North St. Clair, Suite 1745 in Chicago. For more information one should contact Ms. Maureen O'Neill at 1-800-222-1349.

The RRB is just one of many employers concerned about how the failure to educate American students has put our society in peril. They realize that one day illiteracy may endanger our nation to the point of no return. Therefore, it is imperative that corporations, schools, government, associations and private citizens unite to produce competent graduates. Edward Fiske, a writer for the New York Times states:

> America is developing into a nation of educational haves and have-nots, who are fast becoming employment haves and have-nots; this polarization follows racial lines, and the effect on the economy and the country could be devastating.
>
> Research and corporate experience also show that an increasing number of job applicants are among the population groups that are least well served by the nation's schools. Corporate America has seen what the nation's schools are producing and it is alarmed.[27]

Fisk joins educators and corporate employers throughout the country who are also alarmed by the prospect that our nation's economic future will rely heavily upon the performance of an increasingly large number of inept employees. Some believe that advanced technology and more involvement by businesses, i.e., monetary donations, increased communication with schools, would have a positive effect on the condition of our work force. Many are taking steps to alter this situation. Below is material that supports this observation.

Charles J. Mitchell managed training for his California based-manufacturing company, Parker Bertea Aerospace Group. In 1989 he decided that the company should devise a test to eliminate applicants with poor basic skills from the hiring process. Along with his staff, he created a new test and used it for 200 company employees as subjects.

The following excerpt describes how he responded after learning that a large portion of the 200 staff members lacked basic mathematical and word comprehension skills. (Please see attached Exhibit B).

> More than 43 percent of them were unable to choose the right answer (.67) for question 7. A surprising number came up with something that involved 13. On question 10, more than 65 percent of both office and shop employees guessed wrong.
>
> The approach we chose, and now recommend, was to give all workers math tests that measure their ability to perform the calculations that are used on the job.
>
> . . . .after the job-related math tests are graded, the employee is given the results, along with our recommendation of areas needing

INITIAL SCREENING TEST FOR JOB APPLICANTS

Name _____ Date _____ Location _____

NUMERICAL ABILITY

Circle the correct answer. Use for calculations.

1. 13 − 9 =	4	2	3	5
2. 27 + 29 =	56	46	55	57
3. 13 x 13 =	149	179	169	159
4. 128 − 8 =	15	16	14	21
5. 324 ÷ 18 =	16	19	26	18
6. .4 x .7 =	2.8	28	.28	.028
7. .07 + .6 =	.67	6.7	.13	1.3
8. 1.78 − .7 =	.171	1.71	.108	1.08
9. 2.08 + 1.52 =	3.6	.36	4.32	3.32
10. 75 ÷ .05 =	.15	150	1.50	1500

WORD COMPREHENSION

Circle the word that best matches the word in CAPS.

1. SUBTRACT	all	forget	less	better
2. EXTERNAL	random	outside	flatter	old
3. ORIGINATES	monkey	infects	demands	starts
4. SOLVE	cheap	answer	fear	sell
5. DECIMAL NO.	.018	3/16	2-1/2	$12
6. CORRECT	strong	useful	design	right
7. SCHEDULE	attack	coach	plan	clean
8. LEAD	direct	carton	taste	fix
9. TRANSFER	move	make	water	dance
10. EXPLAIN	leave	tell	river	skill

> improvement. We focus on improving the employee's current performance as well as providing tools that may lead to future promotions.
>
> Then we suggest company courses that will serve these specific learning objectives and offer counseling by members of the training department.
>
> Another approach is to use computer-based training (CBT). If you have the money to dedicate to the equipment and the facility you'll need, CBT has some real advantages. For one thing, it doesn't require an experienced instructor. For another, individuals can proceed at their own pace and on their own time. Also, progress testing is internalized in the program, and learning retention rates are better than with traditional classroom methods. Finally, people don't get embarrassed by their rate of progress because nobody is watching except the computer.[28]

Mitchell showed consideration for his company and its employees by instituting a job-related training program to upgrade employees' skills. The program invented more cognizant workers--with each success, they grew more self-assured, began to exhibit new attitudes and continued to participate in training programs even those conducted during off-hours. Mitchell's demonstration proves that companies act in the best interest of all when they educate employees.

Marj Charlier, a reporter for the Wall Street Journal, addresses the same issue that confronted Mitchell--upgrading employees' skills. She describes the decline of competent American workers and the strategies applied by businesses in an attempt to solve the problem.

> An estimated 23 million Americans are functionally illiterate, meaning that their reading and computational skills are very low. Some experts estimate that up to 65% of the work force is "intermediately" literate, meaning that this

group can read at between fifth-grade and ninth-grade levels.

This adds up to a tremendous need for remediation--a need that American industry has been slow to recognize. Though the $30 billion it spends on formal training of all kinds seems respectable, that sum still only amounts to 1.5% of total payroll and involves only 10% of the work force. Furthermore, much of the money is spent not on basic skills instruction for workers but on training for managers.

There are signs that this is changing. The ASTD [American Society of Training & Development] says that 70% of the Fortune 500 companies it surveyed plan to spend more on education and training this year. New remediation programs are popping up at many companies, joining those already in place at such companies as Polaroid, Aetna Life & Casualty Co., Ford Motor Co., Control Data Corp., Motorola Inc., and many others.

An increasing emphasis on quality, seen as necessary if U.S. companies are to compete in a global economy, is prompting more remediation efforts.[29]

Ms. Charlier explains that updating workers' skills will make them appropriate for jobs. Years ago, the work force was broad enough to accept a variety of workers. But this situation was altered with the birth of technology. The companies discussed in Charlier's article are either very high-tech or use some form of technology--in essence, they are mechanizing work and alienating workers from jobs. As technology continues to gain in popularity, we will be unable to wholly foresee all of the changes that await us. Consequently, workers' skills must be updated.

Sinda Slagle, former coordinator of adult literacy education for Washoe High School in Reno, Nevada recommends that businesses form a cooperative alliance between themselves and schools. This

effort would allow educators to create adult education programs within companies to reinforce the attack on illiteracy.

Ms. Slagle mentions that some adults have difficulty in attending night school because of time and transportation constraints. She feels certain that if businesses cooperate with schools in this endeavor, some of the obstacles that dissuade adults from participating in learning programs can be removed.

As Washoe's education coordinator she activated this plan with local companies in the school's vicinity. The end result was that the reading, writing, and math skills of the community's work force improved. Below are the approaches used by Ms. Slagle for program initiation:

> . . . .Most of our tutors are people from the community who have little or no instructional training but who want to help fight illiteracy. The tutors usually receive a one or two-hour orientation on district regulations and the basics of teaching literacy. Admittedly, this isn't much preparation. But the instructional demands aren't high, and I visit the classroom at least once a week to provide guidance and assistance. Also, tutors meet monthly for additional instruction and to discuss problems. Hired by the school system as classified aides, tutors earn $5.35 an hour for their services.
>
> The curriculum is similar to that of other adult literacy programs. . . .On the basis of my assessment of the students' skills, I designed a curriculum of basic reading, writing, and math--with individual instruction plans for each student.
>
> Costs for the program were minimal. The school already had an adult literacy program, and employers provided classroom space, so expanding our efforts to the workplace cost the school system only $4,400 for six months' worth of tutor salaries. And, by enrolling employees as students of the school system, we were eligible for state reimbursement under its adult literacy program.[30]

Unfortunately, Ms. Slagle's program suffered a few setbacks, i.e., low pay forced tutors to leave and there was turnover, some students felt that attending two hour classes for three nights a week was unbearable. Nonetheless, Ms. Slagle persevered, giving other students the courage to complete the programs. Word spread and she was able to expand to more school sites.

Stephen Cohen concurs that training would be more beneficial if it were done close to job sites and feels that training should understand a person's cultural makeup:

> One way to make training more efficient is to conduct it as close to the job site as possible. According to *Training* magazine, nearly two-thirds of all training dollars are spent on travel and lodging. On-site job training will save money as well as get people on board quickly and up to speed on their jobs. It also allows an organization to easily assess current competency levels should other positions open up or job requirements change.
>
> Training will have to take into account individual backgrounds and needs more than ever before. The types of knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed are going to be different. We'll see more variation in propensities to learn, learning styles, basic literacy skills, and functional life skills.[31]

Cohen is correct to advise trainers to study individual backgrounds when training. Doing so, will enable them to distinguish cultural differences that may affect work behavior. Knowing why situations occur; helping workers reach resolutions will form healthy interpersonal relationships and convey new innovative ways to handle dilemmas.

Amanda Bennett shares an interview of a recruiter at Aetna Life & Casualty in Hartford, Connecticut. The Company's efforts to upgrade Hartford's labor pool are revealed.

> When Ana McCormick recruits new employees for Aetna Life & Casualty these days, she does a lot more than collect applications.
>
> In the past few months, she found counseling for a new employee who came from a battered women's shelter. She helped arrange state subsidies for child care for another. For a third, she scrambled around to supply 'a neat skirt and blouse' to wear to work, and to make sure that transportation was available. 'I had to dig into my own pocketbook' for bus fare, she says.
>
> Ms. McCormick's efforts are part of an ambitious plan Aetna began in January to fill 130 slots a year--or 6% of its entry-level positions--from Hartford's inner city. Candidates' first two months at Aetna are spent learning everything from how to write a sentence to how to write a check. Up to two months of specific job training follow.
>
> Aetna considers its Hartford program critical. If the program succeeds, Aetna believes it will be creating a valuable new source of employees. If it fails, the company could face labor shortages that would limit its future.[32]

Aetna Life & Casualty of Hartford is immersed in a tremendous struggle to build a sense of commitment into inner-city residents. The company fulfills social requirements and copes with personal anxieties that would ordinarily overwhelm workers and prevent steady attendance.

This assistance allows residents more time to assimilate the duties of their jobs. Becoming self-sufficient may help them escape from poverty.

The National Issues Forum's Literacy Program (NIF) implements innovative learning that stimulates people toward learning from

experiences and surroundings. This is an empowerment philosophy which states:

> According to this philosophy, people learn from their experiences and their environments. At the same time, they help create their environment with their thoughts and actions. This is an interactive process. Reflective thinking helps people discover, examine, revise, and act on the meanings they've attached to their experiences.
>
> Teachers now use NIF and other group activities more extensively, they report that students enjoy "thinking and talking on that level." They say that they want their students to know about issues and to have "up to date" materials. This seems to indicate that teachers value the learners' participation in public life and see a role for adult education in promoting this process.[33]

The NIF program is helpful because it prepares people to match the profile of a worker. This makes them practical components for companies.

Other options include those presented by Bruce Cooper and colleagues:

> Why not issue vouchers and let poor families enjoy the same success as middle-class families? Given no choices, no resources, and no future, people behave as though they have no interest and purpose. Given resources, they demonstrate enlightened consumerism.
>
> *Second-Chance Schools.* Minnesota created "second-chance" regional high schools for young people wishing to return to school outside their immediate communities. These programs hold great promise, and are natural avenues for state intervention.
>
> *Cooperative College/High School Programs.* Several states now have high schools located on the campuses of local universities. These "middle colleges," as they are called in New York City, give high school students the opportunity to use

> the resources of a nearby college and even take courses for college credit.[34]

Minnesota and New York are serving their communities by providing educational opportunities for deprived youths. Teenagers residing in these states now have options other than becoming dropouts or turning to crime.

It cannot be assumed that schools will be anxious to participate in such cooperative efforts. Cooper, Doyle, and Trachtman cite five reasons why schools are slow to adopt reforms:

> The first reason is that schools are conservative institutions, slow to change in the best of times. They do not lead, they follow, and they follow long-term secular trends. Schools respond to demographic, legal, economic, and cultural changes that are themselves slow to evolve. Thus, schools stick to what they have long known: standard day-to-day practices, schools organized around state and local regulation, and systems that are best described as insulated, even isolated, from changes around them.
>
> Second, while the evidence is clear that our schools are in trouble, the voting public is not convinced that *their* schools are in trouble. . . .
>
> Third, school organization and governance--based on local school districts and neighborhood assignment of students--has produced perverse consequences. The affluent, the discerning, and the ambitious are able to escape the tender mercies of the local monopolies: they change residence, or they pay tuition to private or parochial schools.
>
> Fourth, America's educators act as though they have no stake in the movement for educational excellence. They are not pushing the cause of higher standards; on the contrary, they often object both to the changes and to the people who want to make them.
>
> And finally, the politics of education has remained unchanged in many states and localities. School systems still cling to their bureaucracies

> and their regulations, and parents are still excluded from making real decisions about the schools and teachers to which their children are assigned.[35]

The state of Pennsylvania has established the "State Coalition for Adult Literacy" to tackle its citizens' problems, i.e., illiteracy, poverty, life skills deficiencies, and job training and employment needs. Two Pennsylvania educators discuss the coalition's approach, construction and benefits:

> Adult educators are realizing that the problems of adult illiteracy can be solved only by working in a community with those who are affected by the problems.
>
> One approach to bring together community sectors that have different concerns and that often have not previously worked together is the establishment of state and local literacy coalitions. At the state level, umbrella organizations made up of representatives from the public and private sectors can be strong advocates for literacy and can (1) assist in the establishment and building of local coalitions; (2) develop statewide network systems to disseminate information and technical assistance to local coalitions; and (3) provide leadership in legislation and funding for adult literacy.
>
> Local coalitions are made up of representatives of various sectors of the community who are committed to supporting and promoting literacy. Students should also be included in local coalitions to ensure sensitivity to their needs and interests. Local networking among organizations can establish linkages among community groups that often possess very different perspectives on literacy issues, but may have little understanding of illiteracy. These coalitions bring everyone together to identify local literacy needs, pool local resources and expertise, develop strategies to promote and support local literacy efforts, and promote economic development by uniting literacy services with local business needs. This network also works as a referral system by providing clients with the most appropriate services.[36]

Pennsylvania has discovered that technical assistance is required for building coalitions. Workshops are a good source for information, resources and statewide network support. So far, this state has assembled 23 coalitions and funding decisions are pending on several other proposals.

Judith Spring is Co-Director of Omega, a small school in Madison, Wisconsin. Omega is a not-for-profit organization that annually serves 300 adult students within the community. Basically, Ms. Spring and her staff work to build confidence in their students. Their aim is to strengthen and make students self-reliant toward learning, so students will take the initiative to learn and to teach others.

The faculty holds brainstorming sessions to promote collective planning and teaches students to conduct and act on research.

Judith Spring tells how the school handles adult illiteracy:

> The staff consciously and collectively builds in success for every student. Through discussion, the staff and the student make a plan about the direction of study. The student is in control of the topic and may choose the instructional methods. There are frequent checks to see if the student is satisfied with the direction and progress.
>
> The continued emphasis on student control, the openness to spontaneous conversation, and the technical ability of the staff leads to a high level of trust between the students and helpers. As the student assumes more control over the skill mastery process, the helper's role shifts to providing information about learning "tools" and support in using the tools, including questions.
>
> Through behaviors, voice, and words, staff members grant permission for questioning and respond as non-judgmental but guiding friends. As student develops skills, close attention is given to accuracy of learning.[37]

Omega's faculty consistently interact with students for several reasons: (1) interacting encourages students to study themselves and other people; (2) it influences open communicate --reveals ideas, feelings and develops intimacy; and (3) it teaches people to accept authority. Frequent interaction will help Omega's students become well-balanced.

Chapter III. The Effect of New Work Force Trends

EDUCATION AND BUSINESS

In the past, when employers advertised for applicants to fill positions they had a large capable group from which to choose. During this period, people were graduating from schools with the ability to read, write and handle simple mathematics. They were readily hired by companies. Unfortunately, today's employers and graduates have lost this advantage because a troublingly large percentage are now graduating without employable skills.

Also, many jobs require some form of automation; the rise of technology has caused fierce competition between companies. To compensate, a few employers are consistently investing energy into transforming the human resources under their employ into knowledgeable workers instead of recruiting outside applicants.

For example, in-house training programs in english, math and science have been provided for staff by companies in an attempt to prepare people for technical jobs. While these efforts are commendable and do not go unnoticed, other companies have yet to contribute.

Eunice N. Askov argues that the effects of illiteracy extend beyond the workplace:

> Educationally disadvantaged adults often exhibit clusters of problems, including illiteracy, poverty, and chronic health problems. Literacy solutions must be viewed as tools to help solve our country's social and economic problems. Learners retain and use literacy skills better when skills are taught in a context important to learners such as job skills in the workplace or parenting in family literacy programs.

> In defining literacy, not only must we address the growing need for competence in the use of complex literacy skills, but we must also examine the social contexts of literacy. Definitions of functional literacy encompass issues related to social relevance by expanding the definition to include the knowledge--as well as the skills--that an individual needs to function effectively in a particular environment. Functionally illiterate adults, therefore, include both undereducated and underskilled individuals.
>
> Literacy services must be embedded in other efforts, such as workforce preparation, that are important to the individuals in need and helpful to society. Literacy skills offered in isolation from real-life concerns are not effective; low-literate adults are usually unable to transfer learning from one context to another. On the other hand, when literacy instruction is taught along with other relevant content that is important to the individuals, literacy skills are retained and used.[38]

Ms. Askov has drawn some valid conclusions about the factors that motivate individual interest in literacy. If people can identify with the demands and expectations of literacy, they will become curious and may respond; otherwise literacy will be viewed as meaningless.

Rance Crain of *Crain's Chicago Business* also feels strongly about more business involvement in school reform and criticizes businesses for their mild attitude. He encourages them to take part in restructuring public education by financing the movement and hiring more talented people. Illinois Bell and Ameritech Foundation are two companies lending aid:

> One recent entry on the plus side of the ledger comes courtesy of Illinois Bell and the Ameritech Foundation. The foundation recently unveiled a $1.2-million program to encourage educational excellence annual achievement awards of

> $10,000 to local school councils that can demonstrate movement toward solving problems in their schools. The foundation is to be commended, especially for taking care to make sure that funds will be awarded evenly to elementary and high schools across the entire school system.
>
> Separately, the Illinois Manufacturers Assn. has set an impressive goal for itself this year: raising $1 million for its new Education Foundation, which will aim „ to develop accountability systems for schools.[39]

Because the problems of education affect society, every member bears the obligation to form a concentrated toward improving conditions. Its highly probable that choosing this course of action can bring definite results.

Lisa Keefe exposes the desolate state in which the city's poorly skilled are to be found and the callous attitude of many American companies toward their educationally deprived:

> 'If you want to compete and hire good employees with good backgrounds, you have to hire foreign nationals,' says Jeff Heller, corporate counsel to Amoco Corp. in Chicago.
>
> A more chilling indictment of our public school system is hard to imagine.
>
> The implications for the national and regional public education system go even deeper. Small and medium-sized local manufacturing companies advertising skilled positions say the foreign born are usually the only qualified applicants. That leaves many native-born Americans, and a growing phalanx of uneducated new immigrants, out in the cold.
>
> When employers snap up these skilled immigrants, they again make an implicit decision not to hire or train native-born Americans. As a result, unskilled immigrants are joining unemployed minorities languishing in inner-city neighborhoods, underserved by the public education system and, subsequently, ignored by employers.

> New immigrant legislation passed last year, authored by Sen. Paul Simon D-Ill. sets aside 140,000 visas for highly educated, technically skilled immigrants. The thrust of the legislation suggests that American business disenchanted with the prospects for near-term improvement in the U.S. public education system, has made a subtle, almost unspoken, choice to import labor from abroad rather than to educate it at home.
>
> How Chicago and its business community respond to the needs and demands of these recent immigrants will decide whether the newcomers walk the now-mythic paths to success that their predecessors followed, or get stuck in a two-tiered system in which some languish at the bottom while others careen to the very top.[40]

American companies are fighting for survival. While some are empathetic toward the country's undereducated, they still remain unwilling to hire them. The state of the economy and the knowledge that there are qualified workers elsewhere, make it easy for our companies to stubbornly hold their decision.

The U.S. Department of Labor's Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills recommends that communication between schools and businesses be increased. Businesses should specify which skills are relevant to organizational operations. The commission wants schools to prepare students for employment before graduation; doing this will enable students to sustain themselves and escape life as "educational casualties". Following are other recommendations by the Commission:

> Workplace know-how begins with a foundation of basic skills and competencies. The first part is basic skills--the idea that each student should be able to read, write, and perform arithmetic and mathematical operations. Basic skills also include listening to, interpreting, and organizing ideas, as well as communicating orally.

> Thinking skills make up another important part of the foundation skills. Students should learn how to think creatively, make decisions solve problems, reason, and learn.
>
> Finally, students should master personal qualities including responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management, and integrity.
>
> According to the commission, such efforts 'will increase the productivity of the American workforce, improve our ability to compete in the global marketplace, and provide more meaningful employment, greater career opportunity, and a better standard of living for American workers.'[41]

The Commission is appealing to schools and business to form a liaison. Together, they can make a considerable difference in the operation of education.

The Joint Upward Mobility Project is a program started by seven companies in Connecticut: Aetna Life and Casualty, CIGNA, Connecticut Bank and Trust, Connecticut National Bank, Ensign-Bickford Industries, ITT Hartford, and the Pratt and Whitney Group. These companies were concerned with basic skills training for their employees and the unemployed living in surrounding areas; however, as individual entities, they were unable to furnish financial backing. By combining monies and receiving a federal grant ($380,000 from the U.S. Department of Education), they created a program to handle their needs.

> The program, called JUMP (Joint Upward Mobility Project), is the only program of its type in New England directed specifically at workplace performance and coordinated with the cooperative commitment of private businesses state and community agencies, the federal government and people in the community. The alliance designed the JUMP program in response to its goal to "train Connecticut's workforce.

> The program is designed to teach basic skills such as reading, writing, and mathematics to employees of the seven companies and unemployed people--potential employees for the businesses. The center will use computers to train participants for such positions as bank teller, mail clerk, secretary, nurses' aide, and service work.
>
> Officials believe the program will be a national model to help eliminate illiteracy in the United States. If anything, it is a wise investment for the businesses involved and for the Greater Hartford community.[42]

The companies listed above, fully understand the educational crisis. They know that poorly skilled employees are injurious to organizations. Lost productivity and revenue, continuous re-training and high turnover, are just a few of the costly factors linked to inadequate workers. The JUMP program has proven to be a shrewd investment.

DIRECTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Stephen L. Cohen, President and CEO of the Learning Design Group, expressed his feelings regarding future training in *Training and Development Journal*:

> In the year 2000, training technology will look very different. . . .
>
> Already in use, teleconferencing and satellite transmission will make it possible to conduct even more training by long distance. Fairly recent technological innovations such as video, computers, and optical laser discs are already part of the training environment.
>
> Eventually, those delivery systems will combine to create a real-time training simulation with interactive videodisc. One of its applications will be for adaptive testing and diagnosis for employee training.

> That training won't be for a job but for a set of competencies. The competencies will code sets of job descriptions. The resulting printout will list the most suitable jobs for a particular employee. It will also provide an individualized development plan for the employee to better prepare for those jobs. The entire training system will be self-administered, computer-scored, and, possibly, facilitated by a personal coach--the learner's manager.
>
> That scenario isn't too far off. Several organizations are already developing pieces of the system. It won't be long before it's a reality.[43]

Cohen suggests that future training place more emphasis on individual backgrounds; the large influx of immigrants with diverse cultures will be a significant part of America's new age workers.

Also, there will be barriers that will affect training: (1) multiple jobs--many people who need skills programs will be working more than one job, thereby limiting any extra time for classes; (2) there may be child care and transportation problems; (3) some people are satisfied with low level jobs and may show indifference toward advanced learning; and (4) some foreign subcultures may abhor the idea of educating female members. Considering these factors when formulating skills programs will make employment more rewarding and improve workers' standard of living.

In 1989, the American Society for Training and Development ("ASTD") conducted a research study of the future work force. It discovered that America has two groups of workers numbering in the millions that require special attention: (1) employed workers who must be upgraded through training in order to remain employed; and (2) new workers, unprepared high school graduates, entering the job market for the first time.

The ASTD surmised that increased business involvement was one answer, but, because of slow response by businesses, it offers another:

> . . .our nation's schools need to respond to the call for preparing students to compete in the marketplace before they enter the workforce.
>
> The U.S. Department of Labor's Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) has worked in the past year to understand why students are emerging from the classroom unprepared, and to develop recommendations to help schools teach students the basic skills they will need to make it in tomorrow's workforce.
>
> The report's findings are not that shocking: Students have a greater interest in, and learn more from, classroom experiences that they can clearly relate to the world of work. Not one student from numerous focus groups used in the study thought that a high school diploma by itself guarantees a job in today's economy. Without the motivation to learn students quickly become uninterested in coursework."

The traditional manner of teaching students is obsolete and futile. Schools must devise some means to show students the relationship between being literate and acquiring good jobs. Presently, mediocre abilities barely satisfy the requirements of minimum wage positions. School methods must be re-evaluated and restructured.

Chapter IV. Conclusion and Recommendations

Larry Mikulecky, professor of education and head of the Department of Language Education at Indiana University in Bloomington, believes that by the year 2000, all adult Americans will be literate and possess the needed skills to compete successfully in our economy. Several reports and statistics regarding adult literacy programs cause Dr. Mikulecky to feel thus:

> The results of the most recent literacy tests administered to young adults (ages 21 to 25) by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) indicate that nearly 40% of those tested had difficulty locating information in a typical news article and that more than 60% were unable to state in writing the argument made in a lengthy newspaper column.
>
> The same assessment found that approximately 30% of the adults tested could not write a simple letter to state that an error had been made in billing. When the results are further broken down into demographic categories based on ethnicity and level of education, it appears that we have even further to go. Among those tested, more than 60% of black Americans and more than one-third of high school graduates without further degrees could not successfully write such a letter. From 60% to 80% of dropouts, depending on the number of years they had spent in school, were unable to write this simple letter.
>
> Comparably low performances were demonstrated on such tasks as determining correct change, identifying employee benefits, following directions on maps, making out a check, and using charts to determine which products are appropriate for particular needs. To the extent that such skills are necessary to productive participation in a global economy, the distance to our goal is indeed quite far.[43]

Mikulecky is premature in thinking that all Americans will achieve literacy by the year 2000. Crime, poverty, disease,

ignorance and irrationality have co-existed within society for centuries. These elements adversely affect education and, in some cases, the damage is irreversible.

Also, consider how the continued migration of immigrants will affect this country. Some live in isolation, refusing to accept American culture and in the best interest of our society, we must accommodate this select group. Finally, other world wars and recessions could occur.

Hence, a more realistic view would be to express a hope that every American will have obtained literacy by the year 2000. Whether in the role of manager, worker or concerned citizen confronting the crisis of worker incompetence, every American must support the effort to meet the problem. Citizen apathy will only strengthen the negative consequences which plague our society, i.e., poverty, crime, unemployment, and homelessness. The country could benefit so much if its citizens would work together. If not, our future will be a tragic story of disaster that could have been avoided.

The content of this research paper is intended to assist the RRB in creating a sound remedial training program. This type of program would teach general basic skills to adults, allow the agency to minimize current problems, enable it to grow and be competitive, provide sustaining power and flexibility to serve the needs of a changing work force.

The RRB should apply the following recommendations for initiating basic skills programs:

- o assess needs, develop strategies; review key features of successful basic skills programs, apply for funding;
- o Design program--clearly define objectives, organize by employees' level of knowledge and by job tasks, program should be structured to encourage participation;
- o class material should be relevant;
- o give feedback
- o evaluate program performance.

In addition, a skills program would encourage an exchange of information with businesses, schools and other interested parties. Special programs and field trips could be arranged for students to visit the RRB and obtain a clear understanding of a federal work place. This, in turn, might help to ensure a steady stream of interested job applicants in the future.

Footnotes

[1]Railroad Retirement Board Pamphlet (Washington: 1990), pp. 1-4.

[2]Stephanie Faul, Brad Huang, William B. Johnston, and Arnold H. Packer, "Civil Service," The Hudson Institute (1988), pp. 1, 13.

[3]Interview with John Malich, Director of Personal, Railroad Retirement Board (November 17, 1991).

[4]Interview with Marge Chambers, Chief of Staffing, Railroad Retirement Board (November 17, 1991).

[5]Walter Shapiro, "Tough Choice," Time Vol. 138, No. 11 (September 1991), p. 54.

[6]Malich.

[7]Chambers.

[8]Gilbert Fuchsberg, "Pencils Sharp? E.T.S. to Offer Employee Tests," The Wall Street Journal, Vol. LXX1, No. 160 (June 1990), pp. B1, B4.

[9]Interview with Susan Olenick, Program Director, Educational Testing Service, Princeton, NJ (February 27, 1992).

[10]Educational Testing Service, "AEQUITAS At-A-Glance," Princeton, NJ 1991.

[11]Patricia M. Fernberg, "Proper Skill Training Earns Dividends in Productivity" Modern Office Technology, Vol. 37, No. 3, (March 1992), p. 22.

[12]Patricia Dunne-Rankin and Drake Beil, "A Primer for Workplace Literacy Programs," Training & Development Journal, Vol. 45, No. 8 (August 1990), pp. 45-46.

[13]Interview with Gad J. Bensinger, Ph.D., Chairman, Department of Criminal Justice, Loyola University of Chicago (May 7, 1992).

[14]Interview with Jay Morris, Consultant, Allstate Insurance Company, Northbrook, IL (January 20, 1992).

[15]American National Corporation, "Brochure" (1990) pp. 1-3.

[16]Interview with David Bender, Vice President, American National Bank, Chicago, IL (January 29, 1992).

[17]Paula Grace and Carrie Straub, "Managers as Training Assets," Training & Development Journal, Vol. 45, No. 6 (June 1991), p. 50.

[18]Thomas L. Quick, "What About Training Illiteracy?" Training & Development Journal, Vol. 45, No. 5 (May 1991), pp. 73, 76-77.

[19]Kate Ludeman, "Measuring Skills and Behavior," Training & Development Journal, Vol. 45, No. 11 (November 1991), p. 61.

[20]Stephen L. Cohen, "Training Today," Training & Development Journal, Vol. 45, No. 7 (July 1991), pp. 32-33.

[21]Melanie Kubale, "Helping Hands Directory: Job Training in Chicago," Midwest Women's Center (1988), pp. II-1-II-2, III-2.

[22]Interview with Samuel Tignatiello, Acting Director, President's Office of Employee Training, Cook County, IL, February 1, 1992.

[23]James R. Paetsch, "Applying for a State Training Grant," Training & Development Journal, Vol. 45, No. 4 (April 1991), pp. 61, 64.

[24]Lindsey Novak and Lauren Spier,"How to Deal with 'Bloodhound' Boss" The Chicago Tribune, No. 131 (May 1992), Section 8, p. 1.

[25]Catherine M. Petrini, "Literacy Programs Make the News," Training & Development Journal, Vol. 45, No. 2 (February 1991), pp. 31-32.

[26]Bensinger 1992.

[27]Edward B. Fiske, "Impending U.S. Jobs 'Disaster'" The New York Times, Vol. CXXXIX, No. 48004 (September 1989), p. 1.

[28]Charles J. Mitchell, "Real-World Basics," Training, Vol. 28, No. 2 (February 1991), pp. 60-64.

[29]Marj Charlier, "Back to Basics," The Wall Street Journal, Vol. CCXV, No. 23 (February 1990), pp. R14-R15.

[30]Sinda Slagle, "Workplace Literacy," The American School Board Journal, Vol. 178, No. 4 (April 1991), pp. 29, 43.

[31]Cohen.

[32]Amanda Bennett, "Aetna Schools New Hires In Basic Workplace Skills," The Wall Street Journal, (November 10, 1989), p. B1.

[33]Mary E. Hurley, "Empowering Adult Learners," Adult Learning, 2:20-3-1, Vol. 2, Iss 4 (January 1991), p. 23.

[34]Bruce S. Cooper, Denis P. Doyle, and Roberta Trachtman, "Education and the States--Ideas for the 1990s," Current, 334 (July/August, 1991), pp. 6, 8.

[35]Cooper.

[36]Eunice N. Askov and Sheila Sherow, "Building Coalitions In Adult Literacy," Adult Learning, 2:18, (February 1991) Vol. 2, Iss 5 p. 23.

[37]Judy Spring, "ABE: Taking Control," Adult Learning, 2:18, (April 1991) Vol. 2, Iss 6, p. 18

[38]Eunice N. Askov, "Literacy: Impact On the Workplace, Family, and School," Education, Vol. 111, No. 4 (Summer 1991), pp. 542-543, 546.

[39]Rance Crain, "Business Can Do More In Reform War," Crain's Chicago Business (February 1990), p. 14.

[40]Lisa Keefe, "Chicago's New Immigrants," Crain's Chicago Business (February 24-March 1 1992), p. 17.

[41]Craig Steinburg, "Using Schools to Bridge the Skills," Training & Development Journal, Vol. 45, No. 10 (October 1991), pp. 11-12.

[42]Craig Steinburg, "Jump Start," Training & Development Journal, Vol. 45, No. 6 (June 1991), p. 12.

[43]Larry Mikulecky, "National Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning Goals," PHI DELTA KAPPAN, Vol. 72, Iss 4 (December 1990) p. 305.

[44]Cohen.

[45]Craig Steinburg, "Using Schools to Bridge the Skills," Training & Development Journal, Vol. 45, No. 10 (October 1991), p. 11.

Bibliography

American National Corporation Brochure. (1990). Careers. Chicago, IL

Askov, Eunice N. (1991). Literacy: Impact on the Workplace, Family, and School. Education, Vol. 111 No. 4, pp. 542-543, p. 546.

Askov, Eunice N. and Sherow, Sheila. (1991). Building Coalitions in Adult Literacy. Adult Learning, 2:18, Vol. 2, Iss 5, p. 23.

Beil, Drake and Dunne-Rankin, Patricia. (1990). A Primer for Workplace Literacy Programs. Training & Development Journal, pp.45-46.

Bennett, Amanda. (1989). Aetna Schools New Hires in Basic Workplace Skills. The Wall Street Journal, p. B1.

Charlier, Marj. (1990). Back to Basics. The Wall Street Journal, Vol. CCXV No. 23, p. R14.

Cohen, Stephen L. (1991). Training Today. Training & Development Journal, Vol. 45, No. 7, pp. 32-33.

Cooper, Bruce S., Doyle, Denis P., and Trachtman, Roberta. (1991, July/August). Education and the States--Ideas for the 1990s. Current, pp. 6, 8.

Crain, Rance. (1990, February). Business Can Do More in School Reform War. Crain's Chicago Business, p. 14.

Educational Testing Service. (1991). "AEQUITAS At-A-Glance". Princeton, NJ

Faul, Stephanie, Huang, Brad, Johnston, William B., and Packer, Arnold H. *Civil Service 2000*. A report from The Hudson Institute, Washington D.C., prepared for the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, Career Entry Group, 1988.

Fernberg, Patricia M. "Proper Skill Training Earns Dividends in Productivity." Ohio: Modern Office Technology, Vol. 37, No. 3, p. 22.

Fiske, Edward B. "Impending U.S. Jobs 'Disaster': Work Force Unqualified to Work." New York: The New York Times. 1989, p.1.

Fuchsberg, Gilbert. (1990). Pencils Sharp? E.T.S. to Offer Employee Tests. The Wall Street Journal, Vol. LXXI No. 160, pp. B1, B4.

Grace, Paula and Straub, Carrie. (1991) Managers as Training Assets. Training & Development Journal, Vol. 45, No. 6, p. 50.

Hurley, Mary E. (1991). Empowering Adult Learners. Adult Learning, 2:20-3-1, Vol. 2, Iss 4, p. 23.

Keefe, Lisa M. (1992, February 24-March 1). Chicago's New Immigrants. Crain's Chicago Business, p. 17.

Kubale, Melanie. (1988). Helping Hands Directory: Job Training in Chicago. Chicago: Midwest Women's Center, pp. II-1-II-2, III-2.

Ludeman, Kate. (1991). Measuring Skills and Behavior. Training & Development Journal, Vol. 45, No. 11, p. 61.

Mitchell, Charles J. (1991). Real-World Basics. Training. Vol. 28, No. 2, pp. 60-64.

Mikulecky, Larry. (1990). National Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning Goals. PHI DELTA KAPPAN. Vol. 72, Iss 4 p. 305

Novak, Lindsey and Spier, Lauren. (1992). How to Deal with 'Bloodhound' Boss. The Chicago Tribune, No. 131, Section 8, p. 1.

Paetsch, James R. (1991). Applying for a State Training Grant. Training & Development Journal. Vol. 45, No. 4. pp. 61, 64

Petrini, Catherine M. (1991). Literacy Programs Make the News. Training & Development Journal, Vol. 45, No. 2, pp. 31-32.

Quick, Thomas L. (1991). What About Training Illiteracy? Training & Development Journal, Vol. 45, No. 5, p. 73.

Railroad Retirement Board, November 1990 Pamphlet.

Shapiro, Walter. (1991, September). Tough Choice. Time--The Weekly Newsmagazine, Vol. 138, No. 11, p 54.

Slagle, Sinda. (1991). Workplace Literacy. The American School Board Journal, Vol. 178 No. 4, pp. 29, 43.

Spring, Judy. (1991). ABE: Taking Control. Adult Learning, 2:18, Vol. 2, Iss 6, p. 18.

Steinburg, Craig. (1991). Jump Start. Training & Development Journal, Vol. 45, No. 6, p. 12.

Steinburg, Craig. (1991). Using Schools to Bridge the Skills. Gap. Training & Development Journal, Vol. 45, No. 10, pp. 11-12.

Interviews

Interview with David Bender, Director of Training, American National Bank, Chicago, IL, January 29, 1992.

Interview with Gad J. Bensinger, Chairman, Department of Criminal Justice, Loyola University of Chicago, May 7, 1992.

Interview with Marge Chambers, Chief of Staffing, Railroad Retirement Board, November 17, 1991.

Interview with John Malich, Director of Personnel, Railroad Retirement Board, November 17, 1991.

Interview with Jay Morris, Consultant, All State Insurance Company, January 20, 1992.

Interview with Susan Olenick, Program Director, AEQUITAS Program, Educational Testing Service Company, Princeton, New Jersey, February 27, 1992.

Interview with Samuel Tignatiello, Acting Director, President's Office of Employee Training, Cook County, IL, February 1, 1992.